

MIGRANT AGRICULTURAL LABOR in OHIO

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**OHIO AGRICULTURAL
EXPERIMENT STATION
WOOSTER, OHIO**

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WADE H. ANDREWS and SAAD Z. NAGI¹

INTRODUCTION

Migratory farm workers are defined in this study in the same way as Dr. Louis E. Mueller defined them. He said, "The migrant farm laborer can be defined as a worker whose main income is derived from temporary farm employment and who moves one or more times a year, frequently through several states. They are also employed by processing plants which operate for short periods of time" (1).

This type of labor during the season's peak makes up about 40 percent of Ohio's total seasonal labor force used in agriculture or between eight and ten thousand workers. They are needed for specific kinds of crops grown intensively in some areas of Ohio, i. e. sugar beets, tomatoes, vegetables and fruit. Table 1 shows that over 15 percent of the value of Ohio agricultural crops comes from those needing migrant labor. These crops were grown on only 2.25 percent of the cropland harvested in the state. This shows the importance of these crops to the total agricultural economy of the state and consequently the importance of migrant labor to the State of Ohio.

In addition to the farm labor force migrants also provide labor in food processing plants during the harvest season.

SEASONAL LABOR AND STATE AREAS

The Farm Placement Office of the U. S. Employment Service divides the counties of the state into five areas according to their need for migrant labor. These are shown in Map 1² and include the following:

1. Northwest
2. West central
3. Lake Erie
4. Northeast
5. The rest of the state

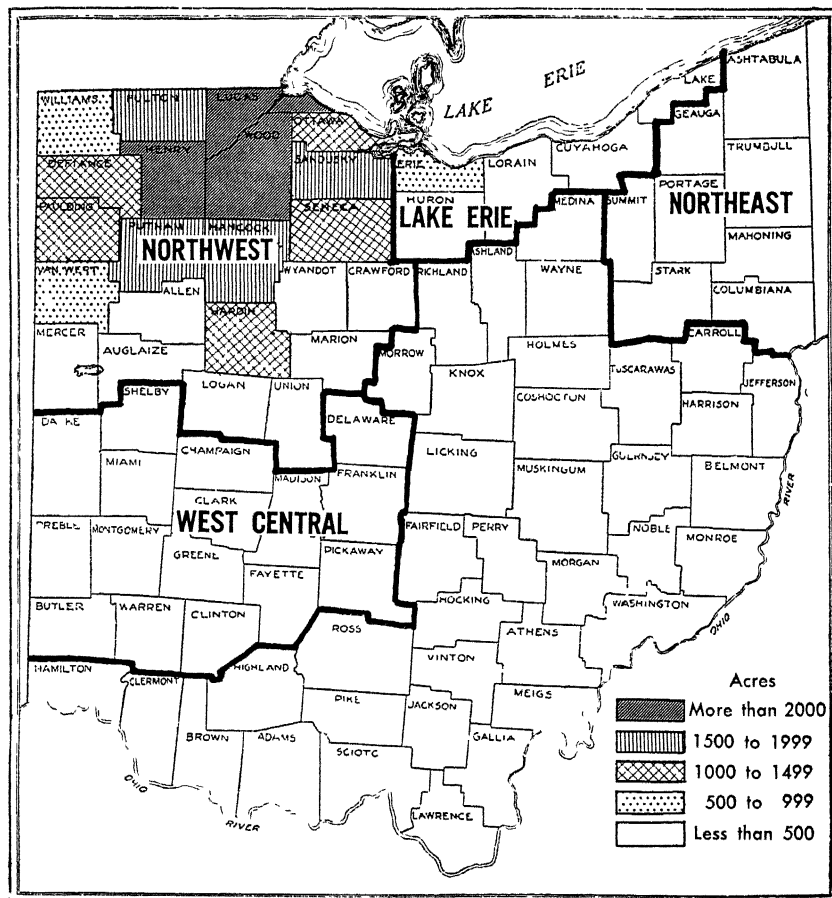
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²The source of data used in preparing Maps 1, 2, 3 are from the U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1950, for Ohio.

TABLE 1.—The Value of Crops Needing Migrant Labor as Compared to the Value of Total Crops Harvested in the State of Ohio

Unit	Total cropland harvested	Crops using migrant labor	Percentage
Acres	10,295,590	232,582	2.25
Crop value in dollars	\$539,850,035	\$83,015,029	15.37

Source: 1950 United States Census of Agriculture. The value for vegetable crops was taken from the 1945 Census.



Map 1.—Sugar beet production acreage in Ohio counties.

Some perspective of the need for seasonal labor according to the different areas of the state may be seen by examining Table 2. Specifically in column 5 we see that the areas with the lowest permanent man-power ratios for land using seasonal labor are Lake Erie, Northeast and Northwest. These are also the areas with the greatest number of acres planted in crops needing migrant labor as shown in column 1 of the table.

TABLE 2.—A Comparison Between the Acreage of Crops Requiring Migrant Labor, the Total Acreage of Crops Harvested and the Permanent Man Power Used in Ohio by Area

Area	No. counties	(1) Crops needing migrant labor acres	(2) Total crops harvested acres	(3) Percent of total needing migrants	(4) Popula- tion employed in farming	(5) Men per 1000 acres of crops needing migrants	(6) Men per 1000 acres of total crops harvested
STATE TOTAL	88	232,582	10,295,590	2.25	173,831	747	16.8
Northwest	22	72,742	3,844,489	1.89	46,449	640	12.0
West Central	16	25,260	2,477,229	1.02	33,872	1345	13.6
Lake Erie	5	27,725	409,307	6.77	5,942	214	14.5
Northeast	8	44,750	704,014	6.35	15,412	344	21.8
Other areas	37	62,105	2,860,551	2.17	72,156	1161	25.0

Source: 1950 United States Census of Agriculture, Ohio; and U. S. Census of Population, 1950.

The distribution by county according to the 1950 census of the types of crops requiring seasonal labor are shown in Table A, in the appendix.

Migrant workers are usually engaged in the hardest kind of agricultural work (stoop work) which is required for certain crops such as sugar beets, tomatoes, vegetables and pickles. Local seasonal labor is used more often in fruit harvesting or hybrid corn detasselling.

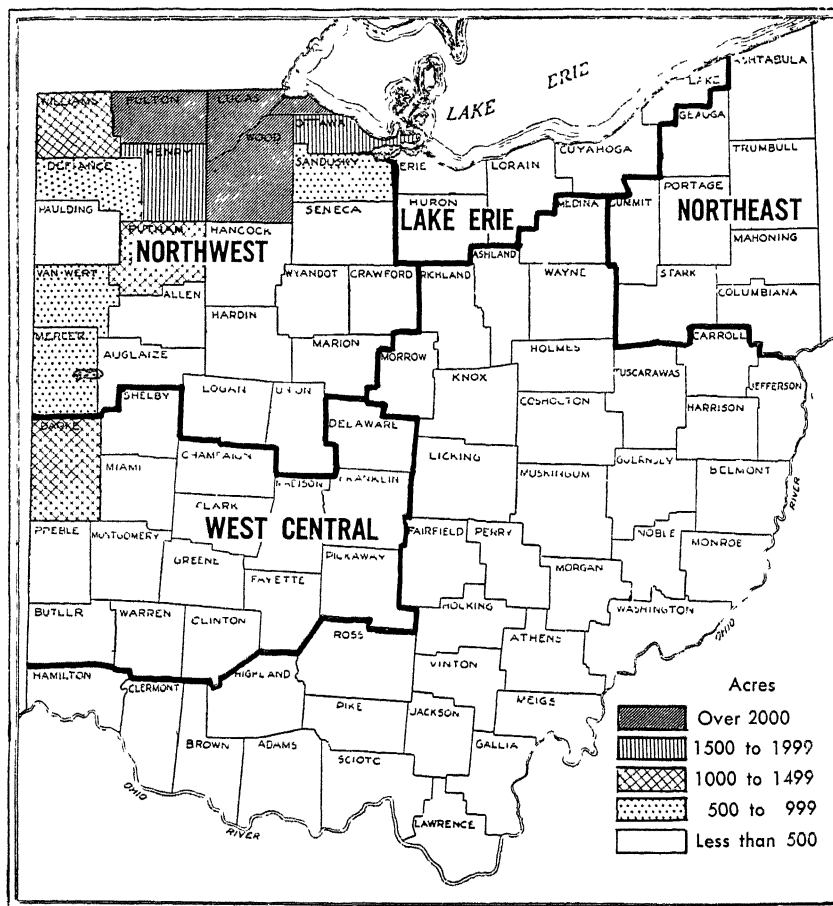
During the peak of the crop season around eighty percent of the total seasonal laborers in the Northwest area are migrant workers where sugar beets, tomatoes and pickles are heavily concentrated (see Maps 1 and 2). In the fruit areas of Map 3 and where hybrid corn is grown, only 12 percent of the seasonal laborers are migrants. The over-all distribution of migrant workers according to the concentration of their numbers is shown in Map 4 while appendix Table B shows the principal

crops requiring migrant labor by county. The counties are also classified according to the estimated number of migrants they hire. These categories correspond to those shown in Map 4³.

WHEN ARE MIGRANT WORKERS NEEDED IN OHIO

The need for migrant labor is determined by the crops raised and the periods in which each crop requires large amounts of hand labor. Table 3 shows the farm calendar by crop which indicates what work is

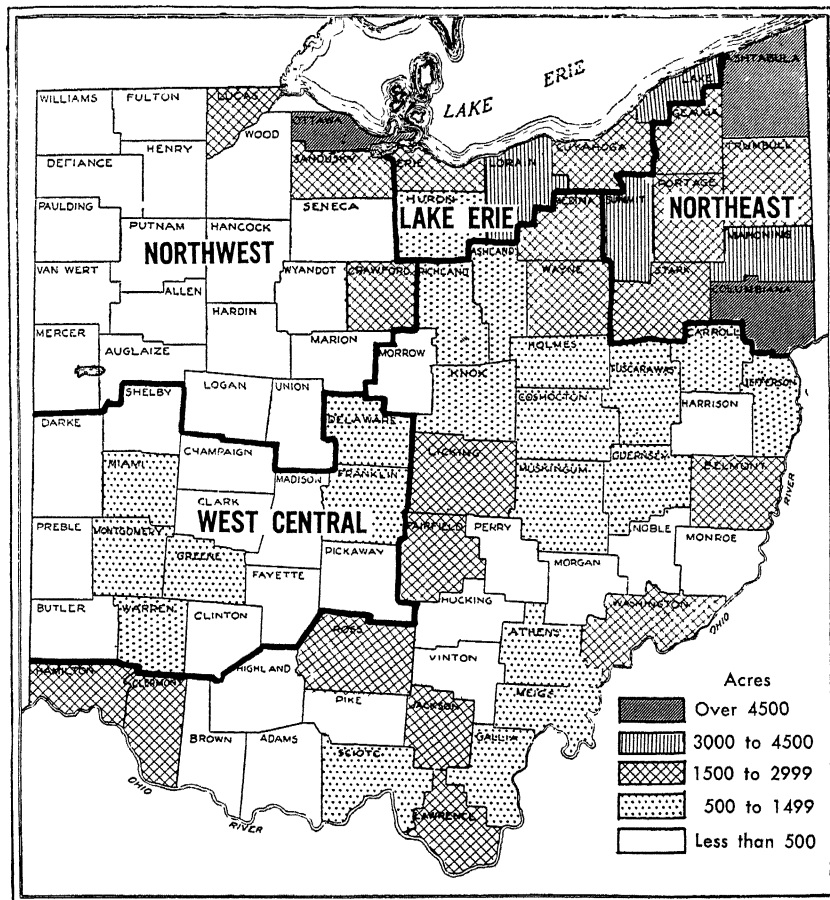
⁴The source of data for Map 4 was provided by the Farm Placement Division of the Ohio Bureau of Unemployment Compensation.



Map 2.—Tomato production acreage in Ohio counties.

available for migrants from late April or May to the early part of November. The peak period of the season is reached in August and extends through October. This period also corresponds with the peak labor needs for food processing.

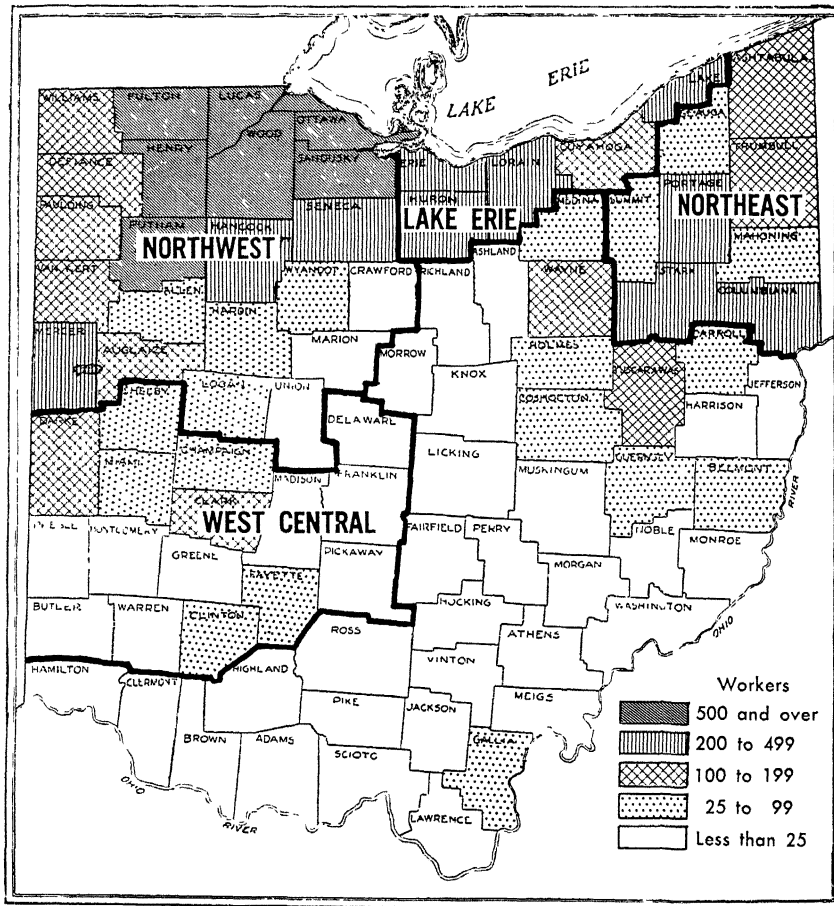
Table 4 shows the different operations which migrant workers perform in each crop during the seven months of the season. These



Map 3.—Fruits, nuts and grape production acreage in Ohio counties.

operations deal largely with the care and cultivation of crops as well as the harvesting. Map 5 illustrates the monthly distribution of workers in the state according to types of crops from May through November⁴.

⁴The source of data for Map 5 is from "Major Agricultural Migrant Labor Demand Areas, 1950," Farm Placement Service, U. S. Department of Labor.



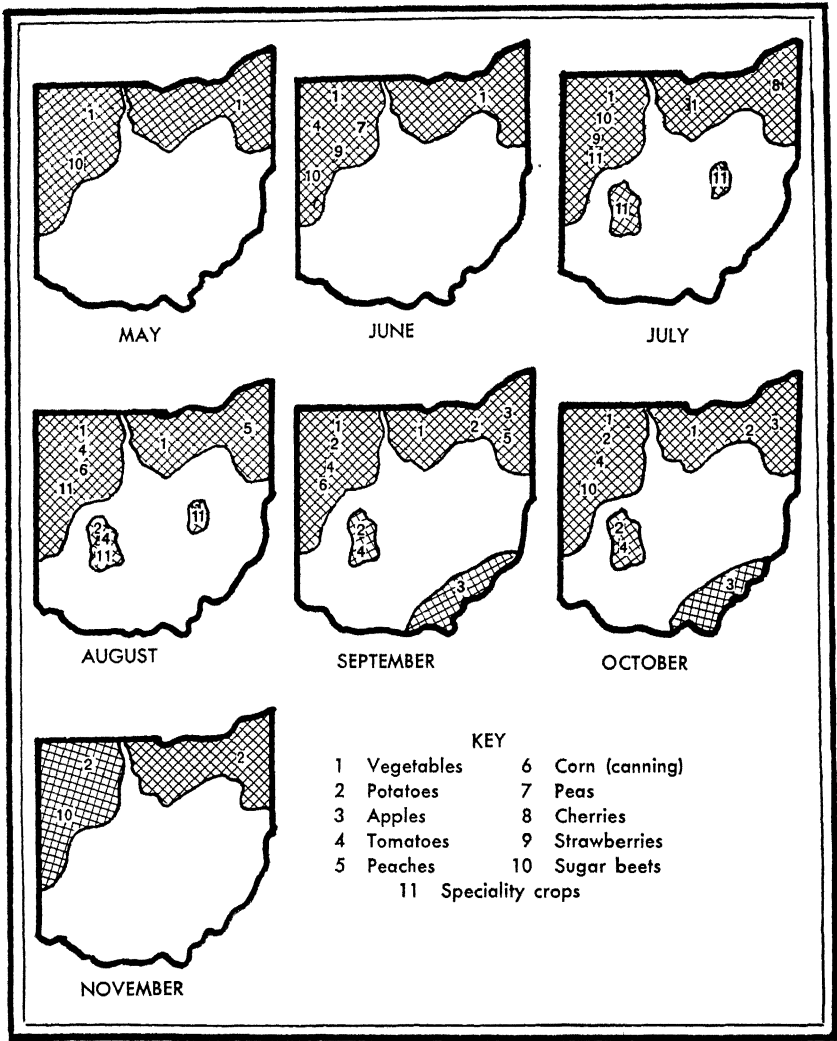
Map 4.—Number of out of state workers used in Ohio during peak agricultural periods by county.

While some migrants come into Ohio in the spring and remain until fall working entirely in Ohio crops, most migrants follow the pattern of coming into the state in late April or May, working in sugar

TABLE 3
FARM WORK CALENDAR

Crop Activities	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Apples - Pears									
Asparagus									
Cabbage									
Cherries									
Corn Detasselling									
Grapes									
Nurseries									
Peaches - Plums									
Peas									
Pickles									
Potatoes									
Raspberries									
Snap Beans									
Strawberries									
Sugar Beets									
Sweet Corn									
(fresh)									
Tomatoes (canned)									
muck									
Vegetables crops									
Food Processing									
Sugar Beet Processing									
Source: Farm Placement Division, Ohio Bureau of Unemployment Compensation.									

beets and other spring crops until July, moving into Michigan or Wisconsin for the cherry crop and then returning to Northwestern Ohio for the tomato harvest. Having finished with this activity in the early part of October, the majority return south to pick cotton, leaving a small number that remain in Ohio to harvest sugar beets, potatoes, and other late crops (3).



Map 5.—Migrant labor demand areas in Ohio.

TABLE 4.—Principal Crops Requiring Seasonal and Migrant Labor

Month	Agricultural and Processing Activity
May	Hoe, thin and bloc sugar beets—Transplant and bloc tomatoes—Plant weed and cultivate vegetable crops—Cut and process asparagus—Pick strawberries.
June	Hoe, thin and bloc sugar beets—Cultivate and hoe tomatoes, vegetables and muck crops—Spray fruit. Harvest: strawberries, peas, sweet cherries, and vegetables.
July	Harvest: fruit, vegetables, beans, pickles, cherries and peas. Process: cherries, peas and beans. Hoe, thin and bloc sugar beets.
August	Harvest: vegetables, pickles, muck crops, sweet corn, tomatoes, and peaches. Process: tomatoes, sweet corn, lima beans, vegetables and pickles.
September	Harvest: apples, peaches, peas, potatoes, onions, grapes, sweet corn, tomatoes, vegetables, and muck crops. Process: tomatoes, fruit, beans, sweet corn and grapes.
October	Harvest: grapes, apples, potatoes, onions, beans, red beets, sugar beets and vegetables. Process: grapes, sugar beets, pumpkins and red beets.
November	Harvest: sugar beets, vegetables, apples and potatoes. Process: sugar beets. Pack: apples.

Source: Farm Placement Division, Ohio Bureau of Unemployment Compensation.

As may be seen in Table 5 the greater part of the migrants are inter-state workers. In the Northwest area they show up as the largest source of labor. Data was not available for other individual areas but migrants are undoubtedly of great importance in the Lake Erie and Northeast areas also.

ORIGIN OF MIGRANT WORKERS AND TYPE OF WORK THEY PERFORM

The distribution of the approximately 10,000 migrant workers who come to Ohio is shown in Table 6, as to their race and place of origin. By far the largest part, 70 percent, of the migrants are American-Mexicans from Texas. A substantial number of southern Negroes are also a part of the labor force with the largest proportion of them coming from Arkansas.

About five percent of the total are southern white migrants. Puerto Ricans are found in the areas of Lorain, Cleveland, Painsville and Youngstown, where they are primarily engaged in industrial work.

TABLE 5.—Estimated Employment and Origin of Seasonally Hired Workers in Agriculture and Food Processing 1955

Period	Area	Total hired seasonal employ- ment	Agricultural Activities									Total food pro- cess- ing
			Domestic						Foreign			
			Total agri- culture	Total domestic	Local	Intra State	Inter State	Puerto Rican	Total for- eign	Mexi- can	B.W.I. and others	
May 1 to May 15	N.W. Area Other Areas Total	1,959 4,942 6,901	1,808 4,802 6,610	1,808 4,802 6,610	948 4,481 5,429	20 20 40	840 266 1,106	0 35 35	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	151 140 291
June 1 to June 15	N.W. Area Other Areas Total	3,646 11,228 14,874	3,392 10,813 14,205	3,392 10,813 14,205	805 9,751 10,556	60 50 110	2,527 910 4,437	0 102 102	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	254 415 669
July 1 to July 15	N.W. Area Other Areas Total	3,367 13,428 16,795	3,095 13,213 16,308	3,095 13,213 16,308	1,010 11,839 12,849	50 50 100	2,035 1,234 3,269	0 90 90	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	272 215 487
August 1 to August 15	N.W. Area Other Areas Total	7,825 11,534 19,359	6,248 9,584 15,832	6,248 9,584 15,832	918 8,091 9,009	65 100 165	5,265 1,258 6,523	0 135 135	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1,577 1,950 3,527
September 1 to September 15	N.W. Area Other Areas Total	12,969 12,671 25,640	6,602 11,104 17,706	6,602 11,094 17,696	940 9,070 10,010	140 60 200	5,525 1,824 7,346	0 140 140	0 10 10	0 0 0	0 10 10	6,367 1,567 7,934
October 1 to October 15	N.W. Area Other Areas Total	3,184 11,163 14,347	1,697 10,801 12,498	1,697 10,719 12,416	800 9,450 10,250	20 72 92	877 957 1,834	0 240 240	0 82 82	0 0 0	0 82 82	1,487 362 1,849

Source: Farm Labor Market Developments, Employment and Wage Supplement, U. S. Department of Labor.

Although they work in agriculture during their free or slack times, much of their agricultural work is in nurseries. A few, however, come directly from the Islands.

No foreign labor is brought to Ohio except on certain occasions. One such instance was when 64 workers from the British West Indies were brought in by the Northeast Ohio Fruit Growers Association for picking apples in the season of 1954 (3). Migrants from Texas are usually engaged in sugar beets, tomatoes, and pickles. Arkansas Negroes are employed in most kinds of agricultural jobs, but are found most often in tomatoes and other vegetables. Florida Negroes are brought to the areas of Canton and Hartsville by growers who have southern farms. These migrants work for the same employer in the South during the winter. White workers from other states who come to Ohio as migrants are usually employed in food processing, fruit picking, and vegetables, especially in the two areas of Portage and Stark Counties.

TABLE 6.—Kinds of Migrant Workers Who Come to Ohio and Their Place of Origin

Percentage	Ethnic Origin of Migrants	Their Place of Origin
70.0 %	American Mexicans	Texas
23.0 %	Southern Negroes	17 % —Arkansas 6 % —Florida, Missouri and other states
5.5 %	Southern Whites	Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee and other states
1.0 %	Puerto Ricans	Most of them are engaged in steel industries in Ohio. Some come from the Islands.
0.5 %	Foreign Workers	From the British West Indies

Source: Farm Placement Division, Ohio Bureau of Unemployment Compensation.

COMPOSITION OF THE MIGRANT GROUPS

Family Composition. The American Mexicans from Texas almost always move in crews under a leader; these crews are made up of family groups. The crew is usually from 10 to 15 workers which might include two to three families, with their children.

The Negroes usually form in groups of workers with crew leaders but they do not often travel as family groups. They sometimes move in groups as large as 100 or more. The Negro group is accompanied by five to ten women who are usually the wives of the leaders and their assistants. These women do the cooking for the group. Only a few of them migrate in families like the Texans.

Since 1953 there has been an indication of an increasing trend in Ohio to hire Negroes although they were not accepted well in some areas at first. The Negroes have proved to be equally as good workers as others and also it has been found to be easier to house single men than to provide housing for families. In addition this type of group is easier to break into small units according to the work needs on different farms (3). These divisions are difficult to make with the Texas families.

American white migrants who come from other states to work in Ohio agriculture move both as families and individually but generally not in crews.

Age Composition. The majority of migrant workers are in the youthful and middle age periods except for the Texans who have a large proportion of children in their groups.

METHODS OF RECRUITING

While a considerable proportion of the migrant workers come to Ohio following the "free wheeling" method of hunting a job, the majority of them come for a definite job or with a work arrangement. Several methods of recruiting are used.

State Employment Services. This is a free service where orders for workers are placed through local offices. The worker is assured of employment and provided with information about the job and working conditions. These offices are located all over the state and are taking an increasingly important part in helping the growers and the workers to balance their needs in the different areas. This is being done both in and outside of the state.

Private Agencies. Private agencies handle some of the employment needs. They charge fees for their services. They are not usually interested, however, in informing the worker about conditions he might expect to find at the job.

Crew Leaders. Crew leaders recruit and transport workers from their home areas. They receive 10 to 20 dollars per worker. They may also use their trucks in hauling farm products to increase their

income. In many cases uninformed workers are exploited by the crew leaders. Large companies sometimes send special representatives to Texas to get in touch with the crew leaders there and make the recruitment contracts. They often advance money to the workers which will later be deducted from their earnings. Also some crew leaders arrange definite jobs for the next season before they leave a work area.

Former Employment. If the employer and the workers feel satisfied with each other the workers may return to the same farm year after year.

Foreign Labor Contracts. Bringing in foreign labor requires a contract which includes items about the minimum number of hours which the workers will work as well as the wages paid. These contracts may be made through government agencies set up for the purpose or through consulates.

TRANSPORTATION AND ROUTES TO OHIO

There are different means of transportation used by migrant workers. The most common is the truck which may be owned by the crew leader, employer or the head of the family. Some come in their private cars and others come by public carrier. There are no laws governing the kind of transportation that is to be provided.

Most migrants from Texas and Arkansas enter Ohio on U. S. Routes 40 from Richmond, Indiana, and 42 at Cincinnati. Most of those who come from Florida and Georgia enter Ohio on U. S. Route 25 also at Cincinnati.

WAGES AND METHODS OF PAYMENT

The worker is paid by the acre or piece, not on an hourly or daily basis.

The wage rates for harvesting sugar beets are set by a procedure provided in the Sugar Beet Act. The U.S.D.A. calls for a hearing to set the rates per acre several months before the season. It varies according to the production per acre. The higher the production the less the rates become.

Tomato harvesting is paid for by the hamper which now runs between ten and twelve cents according to the crop. There again the better the crop, the lower the rate. These average rates include any bonuses offered.

In harvesting pickles the workers receive a half share of the crop instead of wages.

For picking grapes and cherries workers are paid by the pound, for apples by the bushel and for raspberries by the quart.

In general, there is a wage differential in Ohio, the closer the area is to metropolitan centers the higher the rate of wages either by the hour or by piece rates.

The growers usually use two methods to retain non-foreign workers until they finish the job. One, they withhold part of the earnings. These earnings are given to the workers when they finish the work. Two, they give bonus payments after the work is completed.

Wages are paid in one of three ways, either to the crew leader, the head of the family or to the individuals themselves.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF MIGRANTS

Social Conditions. There is general agreement among all writers who have been concerned about this problem that migrant laborers and their families are "representing about the lowest stratum in American rural life" (5). The average annual earnings and length of work period over the nation for these workers as indicated by the Report of the President's Committee is \$550 and an average of 101 days worked (7). Miss L. Genevieve Griffen describes them as follows, "They are people who never have an opportunity to strike any roots anywhere, and are always haunted by the specter of economic insecurity. They are seldom covered by any of the benefits accorded other United States citizens, such as Social Security and Unemployment Compensation" (8). To this may be added the fact that they have little or no social acceptance in the places where they stop.

Housing Conditions. In Ohio there are no large migrant camps such as have been built in a number of other states. Some of the processing plants have dormitory provisions for workers who come without families. This is the best type of housing. Some families live in small cabins on the property of the farmer where they are employed (9). These are sometimes permanent buildings and sometimes portable and they are very small in size. A large proportion of the migrants do not have this good fortune and are housed in such things as shacks, chicken houses, sheds and garages.

An Ohio state official who inspected some of the housing in 1952 found that ten families were living in a total of fourteen rooms. Another family of 12 was living in a one room cabin. He saw a shack housing 13 people where two bed springs without mattresses were furnished for two adults and 11 children.

Generally, however, from most reports the housing conditions in Ohio for migrant workers seem to be about the same as many other states although there are some signs of improvement. One single example of improvement was that of a fruit grower at New Carlisle, Ohio, who set up a camp and employed a social worker to teach the women how to use its facilities (8). In the over-all picture housing is a universal problem. No more than one-third of the housing units of whatever kind are clean, screened, sanitary and have a safe source of water. In addition most housing is located far from the water supply.

Children's Schooling. One of the biggest problems for migrant laborers is schooling and education for their children. The problem has many parts. To begin with, most of the migrants are Spanish speaking people. Second, most of the children are withdrawn early in the school year from schools at their states of origin and return late in the fall. This interruption retards them in their school work. Third, school systems in the areas of work find it difficult to adjust to fluctuating and short time enrollments. Fourth, the children are not well accepted in the work areas either by the other children in schools or by the teachers because of the migrant children's lack of cleanliness and language or cultural differences. Fifth, many children are used for work and earn part of the family income.

Table 7 shows the number of minors under 16 years of age employed in agricultural work during school sessions. The School Attendance Law of Ohio, Section 4849 states: "A child between six and eighteen years of age is of compulsory school age." Also "Every child actually resident in the state shall be amenable to the laws relating to compulsory education, and neither he nor the person in charge of him

TABLE 7.—Minors Under 16 Years Found to be Employed During School Hours in Violation of the Law, July 1st, 1953 to June 30th, 1954

Crops	Farms in violation	Minors employed in violation	Type of Labor		Age of Minors		
			Local	Migrant	4-9 years	10-13 years	14-15 years
Total	68	143*	1	142	26	71	46
Peppers	1	1	—	1	1	—	—
Sugar Beets	6	4	—	4	—	—	4
Tomatoes	61	138	1	137	25	71	42

Source: Consumer's League of Ohio bulletin, June 1955.

*Of the 143 children found working, 139 are white and four are Negroes—129 are from Texas, eight from Florida, four from Michigan, one from Arkansas, and one from Ohio

TABLE 8.—Results of the Health Pilot Study

Examination	Number Examined	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Serological test for syphilis	444	23	5.2
Anal swabs (for shigella)	369	42	11.3
Stool specimens (for pathogenic parasites)	292	55	19.1
Chest X-rays taken—all ages	624	19	3.0
Under 15	270	4	1.4
Over 15	354	15	4.2
Throat swabs (for diphtheria organisms)	457	0	0.0

Source: **Ohio's Health**, Vol. VI, No. 10, October 1954.

shall be excused from the operation of said laws or the penalties under them on the ground that the child's residence is seasonal or that the parent of the child is a resident of another state or that the child has attended school for the legal period in another state." (Section 9849-1)

Health Conditions. From the living and housing conditions and the lack of sanitary and medical care it may be predicted that the rates of disease and particularly certain kinds of disease would be higher among migrants. Table 8 shows the results of a health pilot study among migrants conducted by the Ohio Department of Health in 1952. The data in this table show that a number of people were found to react positively to the tests for several diseases. The rates of these diseases are higher for migrants than for the resident population as shown in Table 9. These tables show higher rates especially of tuberculosis, venereal diseases and parasites. It was explained by Dr. Louis E. Mueller who conducted the study that infant mortality rates were also high among migrant workers (1). He indicated that infant diarrhea is prevalent, and a relatively high percentage of babies are being born at home rather than in hospitals. The health study revealed that 70.4 percent of the migrants had been previously vaccinated. It also showed that 41.7 percent of all ages and 73.8 percent of ages over 15 had obtained previous X-rays for tuberculosis, but that either unfavorable findings have been ignored or perhaps they have moved on before the findings were made known.

Recreational Conditions and Programs. There is a growing interest in the problem of migrant workers in Ohio from different organizations. The most important in this respect at the present time is the United Church Women of Ohio. This organization through the

**TABLE 9.—Comparison of Health Conditions Between Migrants
and Resident Population**

Estimation	Percent positive migrants	Estimated percent positive in resident population
Previously X-rayed for T. B.—Over 15	73.8	unknown, probably less
Previously vaccinated	70.4	unknown, probably less
Serological test for syphilis	5.2	probably less than 3.0
Anal swabs (for shigella)	11.3	probably less than 2.0
New chest X-ray indicating suspected T. B.—Over 15	4.2	Approximately 1.3
Throat swabs (diphtheria organisms)	0.0	Unknown

Source: **Ohio's Health**, Vol. VI, No. 10, October 1954.

help of their regional and national offices was able to carry on a program which they call "Ohio's Ministry of Migrants." This program was undertaken in the summer of 1954 in five communities, Fremont, Willard, Marsh, Norwalk, Toledo and one in Wood County. These programs included several activities as follows:

1. Christian teaching through Vacation Bible Schools for children, pictures, worship services (some in Spanish), and home visitations.
2. Recreation through family nights, movies, games, teams and other programs.
3. Education through teaching of English to Spanish speaking children and adults and scout and brownie troupes.
4. Health education through showing movies on better health practices, teaching health games to children and enlisting the aid of social agencies.

Nine young people, for the most part college students or teachers, were employed by the Migrant Ministry for varying periods of time to carry out the programs. Other than this there is little for the migrants to do except to frequent taverns or commercial recreation. There are few facilities for social participation and integration available to them. As a result a number of problems have resulted in relation to camp followers who prey upon the migrants and their meager earnings as well as difficulties with the resident population.

Welfare Services Available to Migrant Workers in Ohio. Migratory workers may receive relief in Ohio, under a provision stating that, "poor relief shall be furnished those eligible persons who lack legal

residence." This relief consists of "food, clothing, shelter, the services of a physician or surgeon, dental care, hospitalization and other commodities and services necessary for the maintenance of health and decency." (Section 3391-1-13)

However, there are certain legal requirements related to welfare for migrants under the Ohio law.

1. To acquire legal residence a person must remain in one county for a year without receiving relief from public or private organizations.
2. "The local relief authority may pay the migrant's expenses for return to his own place of residence after authorization from the authorities there. If he refuses to return, relief may be denied." (Section 3391-16, 18).

Needless to say these restrictions limit the effectiveness of welfare services to these workers.

OHIO STATE LABOR LAWS APPLICABLE TO AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Workmen's Compensation is compulsory for employers with three or more employees, including agricultural workers. However, practically no other Ohio Labor Law applies to migratory agricultural workers, neither unemployment insurance, nor minimum wage and hours laws (8). For agricultural work during school hours a minimum age is set by Ohio law at 16 years.

Federal Laws. The Fair Labor Standards Act establishes a 16 year minimum age for agricultural employment during school hours. Under the Sugar Act, if the producers are to obtain maximum benefits they may not employ children under 14 or permit those of 14 or 15 to work more than eight hours a day, in cultivation or harvesting of sugar beets or sugar cane.

Under the Social Security Law: "A hired farm worker is generally (though not always) paid by the month, week, day or hour or at piece-work rates. Such workers may be called 'hired hands', 'migratory workers', 'day haul workers,' 'overseers,' and the like. Beginning January 1, 1955, your cash wages for farm work for any one employer are covered by the law if he pays you \$100.00 or more in cash wages in the year. Payment with things other than cash (for example, board and lodging—so many bushel of apples) does not count (11).

Most migrant workers will not receive benefits meant by this law because in many instances the worker is very mobile and does not stay with one employer long enough to accumulate the \$100 required as minimum earnings. Also in some crops they are not paid in cash, i. e., in harvesting pickles they receive the value of half the crop as payment for their work.

SUMMARY

The agricultural migrant workers constitute a considerable proportion of Ohio's total seasonal labor force. Their importance to the state economy is due to the high value of the crops which they are employed in, such as sugar beets, tomatoes, fruits and vegetables. The eight to ten thousand workers who come to Ohio during the working season are predominantly American Mexicans from Texas who constitute 70.0 percent of the total; Southern Negroes are the second largest proportion with 23.0 percent. Some white southerners also come to Ohio as migrant workers making up 5.5 percent of the total. Puerto Ricans who have permanent jobs in steel mills work in the fields during their time off. Foreign labor is rarely used and brought into Ohio only on certain occasions.

The migrant workers are concentrated in certain areas of Ohio. These areas are the Northwest, Lake Erie, Northeast and West Central. This pattern is due to the location of crops requiring seasonal labor as well as to the lower permanent man power ratios to land in these areas. The Northwest area has the largest proportion of migrant workers. Migrants are found in crops requiring a great deal of "stoop work" whereas local seasonal laborers usually work in crops with less of this type of work.

The work season requiring migrant labor extends over seven months from May through November. The peak of the season is from August to October. Some of the workers stay in Ohio for the whole season, but most of them go on to Michigan or Wisconsin during the slack periods for the cherry crop and return for fall harvesting.

The recruitment is done through the State Employment Office, private agencies, crew leaders, by contracts with former employers and by foreign labor contracts. In addition some use the "free wheeling" method or individual job hunting.

Workers come in crews which are composed of family and kinship groups, such as the Texans do; as crews of men accompanied only by

the leaders' wives, such as the Southern Negroes; or sometimes individually. Wages are usually paid by the acre or in piece units according to the crop. However, some work is paid for by shares of the crop.

Social and economic conditions of the migrants are far below standard. Even minimum comforts, sanitation and health care are usually lacking. Children's schooling is also an important problem. Lack of social acceptance makes adjustments difficult.

Federal and Ohio Labor Laws in most instances do not apply to the agricultural migrant laborer. The major exceptions are workmen's compensation (which is compulsory for employers with three or more employees including agricultural workers), Social Security for those that make a minimum of \$100 a year from one employer, and child labor laws. Enforcement of laws in relation to migrants seems to vary widely from one area to another.

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APPENDIX

TABLE A.—Principal Crops by Acres Requiring Outside Labor in Ohio

County	Irish Potatoes	Sugar Beets	Vegetables harvested for sale	Fruits, Nuts and Grapes	Berries	Total
STATE:	26,086	21,710	78,885	100,507	3,458	232,582
Adams	91	—	47	197	6	341
Allen	217	249	370	455	19	1,310
Ashland	112	—	168	605	74	2,269
Ashtabula	550	—	827	6,062	90	7,529
Athens	132	—	29	982	12	1,155
Auglaize	150	—	172	164	4	490
Belmont	116	—	264	1,826	40	2,246
Brown	37	—	115	227	8	387
Butler	29	—	581	411	13	1,034
Carroll	131	—	34	1,109	22	1,296
Champaign	570	—	171	151	20	912
Clark	1,066	—	137	364	14	1,581
Clermont	103	—	268	1,770	21	2,162
Clinton	11	—	466	157	5	639
Columbiana	1,019	—	1,580	4,263	278	7,140
Coshocton	761	—	159	1,117	12	2,049
Crawford	95	—	59	2,009	5	2,168
Cuyahoga	239	—	2,038	2,267	123	4,667
Darke	565	—	1,402	327	18	2,312
Defiance	95	1,022	792	347	27	2,283
Delaware	4	—	197	930	6	1,137
Erie	479	433	3,250	2,835	33	7,030
Fairfield	60	—	478	1,591	71	2,200
Fayette	3	—	825	129	1	958
Franklin	112	—	2,034	1,048	21	3,215
Fulton	437	1,520	4,410	337	53	6,757
Gallia	142	—	274	745	15	1,176
Geauga	506	—	209	2,607	19	3,341
Greene	114	—	430	653	13	1,210
Guernsey	79	—	39	706	19	843
Hamilton	254	—	2,216	1,814	90	4,374
Hancock	111	1,737	409	300	19	2,572
Hardin	597	1,039	541	244	35	2,456
Harrison	21	—	31	479	10	541
Henry	106	2,110	2,224	176	19	5,176
Highland	42	—	164	257	11	474
Hocking	110	—	95	367	10	582
Holmes	92	—	28	943	35	1,098
Huron	550	85	1,917	856	32	3,440
Jackson	72	—	32	2,104	7	2,215
Jefferson	39	—	155	1,349	21	1,564
Knox	98	—	119	776	12	1,005
Lake	191	—	927	3,885	202	5,205
Lawrence	131	—	951	2,491	194	3,767

TABLE A.—Principal Crops by Acres Requiring Outside Labor in Ohio—Continued

County	Irish Potatoes	Sugar Beets	Vegetables harvested for sale	Fruits, Nuts and Grapes	Berries	Total
Licking	174	—	329	1,852	19	2,386
Logan	40	—	666	352	8	1,066
Lorain	802	—	2,337	4,164	180	7,483
Lucas	1,035	2,004	6,698	1,263	166	11,126
Madison	61	—	1,568	59	4	1,692
Mahoning	873	—	1,583	2,990	82	5,528
Marion	37	—	310	406	9	762
Medina	558	—	400	1,781	27	2,766
Meigs	380	—	818	671	10	1,879
Mercer	123	6	1,073	219	7	1,437
Miami	472	—	474	550	11	1,507
Monroe	266	—	73	373	11	717
Montgomery	192	—	1,031	1,328	244	2,795
Morgan	299	—	83	248	12	642
Morrow	150	—	42	327	8	527
Muskingum	550	—	167	1,035	32	1,784
Noble	101	—	2	162	6	271
Ottawa	34	1,253	2,407	5,414	16	9,124
Paulding	16	1,143	369	81	3	2,332
Perry	49	—	88	336	10	483
Pickaway	50	—	3,642	241	18	3,951
Pike	117	—	18	204	9	348
Portage	1,562	—	1,674	2,147	64	5,447
Preble	160	—	64	229	7	460
Putnam	490	1,591	1,212	195	3	3,491
Richland	492	—	381	1,231	31	2,135
Ross	311	—	745	1,668	29	2,753
Sandusky	234	1,942	1,797	2,004	46	6,023
Scioto	735	—	745	843	32	2,355
Seneca	98	1,285	447	375	20	2,225
Shelby	21	—	199	132	4	356
Stark	557	—	4,391	2,813	126	7,887
Summit	269	—	1,176	2,947	82	4,474
Trumbull	571	—	990	1,714	29	3,304
Tuscarawas	616	—	486	1,354	31	2,487
Union	3	—	553	228	5	789
Van Wert	20	777	855	162	2	1,816
Vinton	82	—	52	511	6	651
Warren	33	—	887	572	9	1,501
Washington	760	—	1,540	1,954	34	4,288
Wayne	2,048	—	440	1,948	79	4,515
Williams	91	550	1,191	391	27	2,250
Wood	148	2,633	3,131	374	74	6,360
Wyandot	24	331	141	227	6	729

Source: United States Census of Agriculture—1950.

**TABLE B.—Principal Crops Requiring Migrant Labor
During the Peak Period**

County	Crops
Over 500 Workers Per County	
Fulton	Tomatoes, sugar beets, strawberries, muck crops, and sweet corn.
Henry	Tomatoes, sugar beets, corn detasselling, and truck crops.
Lucas	Tomatoes, truck crops, sugar beets, fruit, nurseries, greenhouses.
Ottawa	Tomatoes, sugar beets, fruit and pickles.
Putnam	Sugar beets, and tomatoes.
Sandusky	Tomatoes, cherries, sugar beets, fruit, and nurseries.
Wood	Tomatoes, sugar beets, strawberries, and corn detasselling.
200-499 Workers Per County	
Columbiana	Fruit and vegetables.
Erie	Fruit and vegetables.
Hancock	Tomatoes and sugar beets
Huron	Muck crops, and fruits.
Lake	Nurseries, greenhouses and fruit.
Lorain	Greenhouses, fruit and vegetables.
Mercer	Tomatoes and muck crops.
Portage	Muck crops, potatoes, and greenhouses.
Seneca	Pickles, tomatoes, sugar beets, and strawberries.
Stark	Muck crops.
100-199 Workers Per County	
Ashtabula	Grapes, vegetables and fruit.
Auglaize	Tomatoes and vegetables.
Clark	Potatoes and vegetables.
Darke	Vegetables and tomatoes.
Defiance	Tomatoes and sugar beets.
Cuyahoga	Greenhouses and vegetables.
Paulding	Tomatoes and sugar beets.
Trumbull	Vegetables and fruit.
Tuscarawas	Vegetables and fruit.
Van Wert	Tomatoes and sugar beets.
Wayne	Potatoes, vegetables and fruit.
Williams	Tomatoes, and sugar beets.

**TABLE B.—Principal Crops Requiring Migrant Labor
During the Peak Period—Continued**

County	Crops
25–29 Workers Per County	
Allen	Tomatoes, and sugar beets.
Belmont	Vegetables, greenhouses and fruit.
Carroll	General farming, and fruit.
Champaign	Pickles and potatoes.
Clinton	Corn detasselling.
Coshocton	Fruit, potatoes and vegetables.
Fayette	Corn detasselling.
Gallia	Vegetables.
Geauga	Potatoes and vegetables.
Guernsey	Fruit, dairy and vegetables.
Hardin	Truck crops and tomatoes.
Holmes	Dairy and general farming.
Logan	Tomatoes.
Mahoning	Vegetables, fruit and greenhouses.
Medina	Dairy, fruit and greenhouses.
Miami	Tomatoes and nurseries.
Shelby	Tomatoes.
Summit	Greenhouses, vegetables and fruit.
Warren	Corn detasselling and sweet corn
Wyandot	Tomatoes and sugar beets.

Source: Consumers League of Ohio and Farm Placement Division, Ohio Bureau of Unemployment Compensation.